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Foreign Trade of Albania

Foreign trade has long provided a necessary supplement to Albanian domestic production; with the advent of the postwar industrialization program, large scale receipts of foreign capital have been even more imperative. Since the break with Yugoslavia in 1948, Albanian economic development has been supported largely by the Soviet Union and the other members of the Sino-Soviet Bloc. On the basis of long-term credits and outright grants, Albania has received whole industrial enterprises, large amounts of machinery and industrial materials, and technical aid for the development of its mining industries and the establishment of a domestic light industry.

Albanian ability to export has increased greatly in recent years largely as a result of this rapid development of the extractive industries which now provide a major portion of Albanian exports. Inasmuch as almost all of Albania's trade is carried on with the Sino-Soviet Bloc, these increased exports of scarce materials represent a real gain to the Bloc. Nevertheless, Albanian import requirements (industrial materials as well as food and consumer goods) remain far in excess of export capabilities and will continue to be so for a long time. It is probably this realization that prompted the Soviet cancellation

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of Albanian debts valued at $105.5 million in April 1957 and the East German announcement in December of that year releasing Albania from the obligation to repay credits granted through 1955.

Further credits for the purchase of food and industrial goods have already been extended by the Soviet Union; it is expected that the other members of the Sino-Soviet Bloc will also continue to subsidize the Albanian economy through long-term loans and grants.

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Foreign Trade of Albania

Value of Foreign Trade (in millions $)

	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Exports	4.0	5.1		9.6			
Imports	15.2	19.2		24.8			
Turnover	19.8	25.0	33.8	35.6	40.2		39.4

Geographic Distribution of Trade (in %)

	1948	1949-1953	1954	1955	1956
Bloc	38	100	98	96	96
Free World	62	0	2	4	4

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